

Message Text

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SUBJECT:EXERCISE TEAMWORK 76: B-52 ROLE

REF: A. STATE 125300 B. LONDON 09821

1. REF A EXPLAINED THE SEA SURVEILLANCE ROLE OF B-52S
OPERATING FROM RAF UPPER HEYFORD IN EXERCISE TEAMWORK
76. REF B ADVISED OF BRITISH DESIRES FOR NO PUBLICITY
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ON B-52 DEPLOYMENT AND OVERFLIGHTS IN U.K. WITH SPECIFIC

REFERENCE TO NO NEWS MEDIA VISITS TO UPPER HEYFORD FLIGHT LINE DURING DEPLOYMENT. NO PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH DEPLOYMENT. AND NO LOW FLIGHT OVER THE U.K. OR AREA OF BRITISH OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS INSTALLATIONS.

2. EMBASSY SHOULD CONFIRM THAT FCO IS AWARE OF FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

A) THIS DEPLOYMENT IS NOT SIMILAR IN NATURE TO THE "GIANT BLAST" WEAPONS SYSTEMS DEMONSTRATION (REFTEL B). IN FACT, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST TIME THE B-52 HAS BEEN USED IN A MAJOR EXERCISE IN THE COLLATERAL MARITIME MISSION ROLE. MUCH OF THE "SENSITIVITY" OF B-52 OPERATIONS IS BASED ON THE STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WAR MISSION OF

THE B-52S, WHICH IS NOT THE MISSION OF THE AIRCRAFT IN THIS EXERCISE.

B) IT IS NOT LIKELY, IN VIEW OF PAST EXPERIENCE, THAT B-52S CAN OPERATE FROM FOREIGN BASES WITHOUT ATTRACTING NEWS MEDIA ATTENTION, WHETHER DESIRED BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT OR NOT.

3. GIVEN THE HISTORIC BRITISH INTEREST IN SEA SURVEILLANCE AND SEA CONTROL, IT IS HOPED THAT THEY WILL CONSIDER THE ABOVE FACTS AND REEVALUATE THEIR "NO PUBLICITY" POSITION ON THE MARITIME ROLE OF B-25S IN TEAMWORK 76, TO PERMIT A LOW-KEY STATEMENT DRAWN FROM CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE BELOW.

4. EVEN IF THE BRITISH DO NOT AGREE, REQUEST FCO APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AND RESPONSES PER PARA 3 REF B FOR CONTINGENCY USE IF QUERIED ON THE PRESENCE OF THE B-52S AT UPPER HEYFORD:

A) STATEMENT: QUOTE: IN CONJUNCTION WITH NATO NAVAL EXERCISE TEAMWORK 76 TO BE CONDUCTED 10 THROUGH 23 SEPTEMBER 1976, FOUR U.S. AIR FORCE B-52 AIRCRAFT CONFIGURED FOR MARITIME PATROL SUPPORT OF THE ALLIED CONFIDENTIAL

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NAVAL FORCES WILL BE TEMPORARILY OPERATING OUT OF RAF UPPER HEYFORD. UNQUOTE

B) Q: WHAT DOES CONFIGURED FOR MARITIME PATROL SUPPORT MEAN?

A: IT MEANS THAT THE B-52 IS NOT CONFIGURED AS A STRATEGIC BOMBER, BUT IS CONFIGURED FOR SUCH TRADITIONAL

MARITIME ROLES AS ANTI-SHIPPING SURVEILLANCE AND AERIAL MINING. SEA SURVEILLANCE IS A COLLATERAL MISSION OF SAC.

C) Q: WILL THE B-52S HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOARD?

A: A: AS WE HAVE STATED THESE SPECIFIC FOUR B-52 AIRCRAFT HAVE BEEN SPECIFICALLY CONFIGURED FOR TRADITIONAL MARITIME SURVEILLANCE MISSIONS. AS A REGULAR POLICY THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT CONFIRM OR DENY THE PRESENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOARD ANY SPECIFIC AIRCRAFT OR SHIP.

D) Q: WHEN WILL THE FOUR B-52S ACTUALLY BE BASED IN THE U.K.?

A: IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE FOUR B-52S WILL BE TEMPORARILY BASED AT RAF UPPER HEYFORD 16-24 SEPTEMBER 1976.

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E) Q: WHY DO THE B-52S HAVE TO BE BASED IN THE U.K.?

A: U.K. BASING OF THE AIRCRAFT IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE COMBINATION OF AIRCRAFT RANGE AND TIME ON-STATION REQUIREMENTS DURING THE EXERCISE. MOST OPERATIONS WILL BE OVER WATER.

F) Q: HOW MANY U.S. AIR FORCE PERSONNEL WILL BE INVOLVED IN THE RAF UPPER HEYFORD TEMPORARY BASING?

A: ABOUT 90 U.S. AIR FORCE CREW AND SUPPORT PERSONNEL WILL BE INVOLVED.

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5. THIS IS A JOINT STATE-DEFENSE MESSAGE. ROBINSON

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